

SITUATION REPORT NO. 28
INCIDENT NO. 99-009
DATE: July 29, 1999 TIME: 4:00 p.m.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Storms and flooding – Above normal soil moisture content throughout North Dakota, compounded by seven years of flooding and additional precipitation, has resulted in overland, river and flash flooding and ground movement (landslides and mudslides). Excessive high winds associated with storm and tornado activity have contributed to ongoing problems faced by North Dakotans.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: No change from previous reports.
3. DAMAGES: The level of Devils Lake at Creel Bay measured 1,447.01 feet on July 29.

A July 27 storm in Dickey County with tornadic-type conditions caused property damage south and west of the city of Ellendale. One manufactured home was smashed, another was tipped over and half of a third home was torn away. At one farm, windows were broken, and structural damage occurred to buildings. One business in Ellendale sustained broken windows. A barn collapsed, and trees were uprooted throughout the area.

During the early morning hours of July 22, western North Dakota was struck by storms with winds in excess of 80 miles per hour (mph), heavy rain and hail. A storm struck Williams County shortly after midnight as high winds blew a roof of a business and shingles off homes, and knocked tree branches down. Hail that measured as much as three-quarters of an inch damaged vehicles. Owners of a farmstead 18 miles northwest of Williston lost grain bins and a quonset that contained farm machinery. The home sustained damages, as well. The city of Genora was without power for several hours when power poles were downed during the storm.

Crops in Mountrail County sustained damage during a July 22 storm. A 10 percent loss of yield for 14,000 acres of small grain has been reported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) emergency board for Mountrail County. Several trees and power poles were downed during the storm.

In Ward County, a 4:00 a.m. July 22 storm with wind gust of up to 84 mph knocked down power lines and trees. Approximately one to two inches of rain and hail fell in a two-hour period.

On July 22 in Pierce County, high winds that came through the city of Rugby uprooted trees and downed power lines, causing temporary outages. One farmer reported that his outer buildings had been flattened during the storm. The Pierce County USDA emergency board reported that excessive rain and high winds caused crop and shelterbelt damage in the northern half of the county. The board places damages to shelterbelts at \$40,000. An estimated 5 percent of yield loss occurred to 133,500 acres of wheat, sunflowers, canola, barley and flax.

In Logan County, high winds, rain and golfball-sized hail that fell during a July 23 storm damaged homes, crops and vehicles, including a sheriff's patrol car. Trees were downed in the Gackle area.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: The Salvation Army's Community Restoration Program has financial assistance available to families and individuals who have been affected by the flooding and winter storm disasters of 1997 and by the 1998 flood disaster. Limited assistance is available for individuals and families impacted by the 1999 disaster. The Community Restoration Program requires 1999 applicants to first register for assistance through FEMA. Financial assistance includes help with rebuilding homes; all funds are paid directly to the contractor.

Staff for Upper Midwest Relief of the United Methodist Committee on Relief continues working with area clergy and Lutheran Rural Relief to develop an interfaith coalition that addresses the unmet needs of flood victims. Funding for staff ends August 13.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: During the July 22 storm, the Williams County Emergency Manager sent a generator to the city of Grenora to run air conditioning at the Senior Citizens Center.

Program Updates for FEMA-1279-DR-ND

The state-federal Public Assistance Program had received a total of 280 applications. Applicants include: 41 counties; 134 cities; 13 electrical cooperatives; 27 school districts; 13 park districts; 19 water resource boards; five Indian reservations; seven state agencies; and 21 others, including private non-profit organizations providing essential governmental services. Eligibility is pending for 10 other applicants.

By July 28, North Dakota Job Service had received 5,315 claims for Disaster Unemployment Assistance. To date, \$1,664,657 in benefits has been paid to farmers, ranchers, farm workers, migrant workers and other self-employed individuals who lost income because of the disaster.

To date, 6,777 North Dakotans have applied for Disaster Housing Assistance. To date, FEMA has paid \$5,479,793 million in benefits under the Disaster Housing Program.

The Individual and Family Grant Program, administered by North Dakota Emergency Management, has received 2,826 applications and approved \$289,711 in benefits. The average grant amounts to \$604.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) has sent 5,636 applications to disaster victims and has administered \$2,021,800 in loans as of July 29.

Devils Lake State Flood Coordination Center Meeting

The Devils Lake State Flood Coordination meeting was held July 22. Following is a summary of that meeting:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Efforts to raise the lake level protection system for the city of Devils Lake are on schedule, USACE officials reported. Construction of pumping stations for the levee system will be completed this summer, and work to raise the levee to a top-of-levee elevation of 1,457 feet should conclude by the end of the year. Construction on the project began in 1995 and has cost approximately \$35 million.

The USACE has completed its emergency work for the city of Devils Lake for this year. That work included reinforcing six levees for the Spirit Lake Sioux Tribe and providing an access road to a lift station at Peterson Subdivision, located along the Devils Lake shoreline.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

NFIP administrators are reviewing language for an endorsement to flood insurance policies that would allow for payment of claims in situations where flood inundation is imminent. This endorsement is similar to past waivers issued to Devils Lake area policyholders. Since 1996, FEMA and the Federal Insurance Administration (FIA), working through the NFIP, have issued waivers of a requirement that insured properties must be continuously flooded for 90 days before a claim would be made. The waivers were granted because Devils Lake is part of a closed lake basin, and hence, no water flows out of the basin area. During the past three years, the waiver had evolved as new circumstances had arisen. Under the waivers, homeowners have moved 400 structures from the path of floodwaters. Previous waivers have allowed homeowners to use the proceeds from their insurance policies to move their structures to areas less prone to flooding. The waiver and endorsement to the policy have and will continue to address the issue of repetitive loss to the same properties. The

prepayment of claims have saved the flood insurance program an average 25 percent for each claim in the Devils Lake area.

Following is a chart outlining NFIP claims data for Benson and Ramsey Counties:

	BENSON COUNTY	RAMSEY COUNTY
TOTAL FILED CLAIMS 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998	211	456
TOTAL PAID CLAIMS	129	266
TOTAL MITIGATION CLAIMS PAID -- \$750 OR UNDER	19	59
TOTAL CLAIMS CLOSED WITHOUT PAYMENTS	63	131
TOTAL MITIGATION CLAIMS PAID	\$11,118.00	\$40,932.00
TOTAL CLAIMS PAID EXCLUDING MITIGATION	\$3,744,608.00	\$19,330,168.00
AVERAGE CLAIM PAYMENT	\$29,030.00	\$72,700.00

N.D. State Water Commission

Communities will be required to change floodplain ordinances if they adopt the revised preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRMs) now under development through the NFIP. These FIRMs for Ramsey County, Benson County and the Spirit Lake Tribe, which will include the cities of Devils Lake, Minnewaukan and Churchs Ferry, will show the 100-year flood elevation (base flood elevation - BFE) and also show the 500-year floodplain at an elevation of 1,460 feet msl. This elevation roughly reflects the natural outlet elevation from Stump Lake to Sheyenne River (which is 1,459 feet). A formal appeals and ordinance adoption process must be followed before these revised preliminary FIRMs become the effective NFIP flood maps for the area.

Most of House Bill 1167 (North Dakota Floodplain Management Act of 1999) will go into effect on August 1, 1999. The act reflects changes to the North Dakota Century Code addressing comprehensive planning for cities, counties and townships; subdivisions for cities and counties; and floodplain management duties of the State Engineer. A significant change in this legislation is the State Engineer reviewing the hydraulic modeling of proposed physical changes to regulatory floodways for technical completeness. The section of the act that changes the state floodplain management standard from elevating or dry flood-proofing to the base flood elevation (BFE) to one-foot over the BFE will be enacted on August 1, 2000.

Devils Lake has remained near 1,447 feet msl (mean sea level) for the past several weeks. At this elevation, Devils Lake covers approximately 124,000 acres. The divide elevation separating Devils Lake and Stump Lake has been revised to 1,447.0 feet msl. The previously reported divide elevation of 1446.6 feet was based on a benchmark in the area. There is a difference of 0.45 feet between that benchmark and the one used for the lake level gauge on Devils Lake.

The SWC is in the process of evaluating its water storage sites for 1999 for its Available Storage Acreage Program (ASAP) in the upper Devils Lake Basin. Checks should be mailed to the participants within two to three weeks. The SWC anticipates about 15,000 acre-feet will be stored in 1999.

Reconstruction of the Morrison Lake control structure, which began last month, is expected to be completed in about two weeks. The new control structure will allow Sweetwater-Morrison Lake to be held 0.5 feet higher during the summer months, thereby holding 3,500 acre-feet off the normal yearly peak of Devils Lake. The new control structure should also help reduce flooding in the Morrison Lake area.

North Dakota Department of Insurance

Staff at the Department of Insurance has received several consumer calls regarding a waiver of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) for Devils Lake policyholders. These callers have been referred to their insurance agent and their county emergency manager.

N.D. Department of Transportation (DOT), Devils Lake District

Work continues on N.D. Highway 57 at the Narrows. The bridge deck was scheduled to be poured either July 23 or 24 and will be at an elevation of 1,464.5 feet. Completion of the bridge by mid-August is anticipated. A last-minute complication to opening the crossing will be removal of the old bridge.

Work is in the final stages on raising the riprap elevation on all lake crossings. This work has proven to be effective in preventing any major damage to roads in recent high winds.

A contractor is making good progress on grade raises on N.D. Highway 20 at Mission Bay and Black Tiger Bay. The road will be elevated to 1,452.75 feet. DOT construction forces supervising this work anticipate completion of both grade raises in September.

Bids were opened last week on grade raise projects on N.D. Highway 20, north of the Narrows crossing, and N.D. Highway 57, south of the Narrows. Work to elevate the roads to 1,452 feet should begin on both projects during the July 25-31 week. The amount of work completed on these projects this year will depend primarily on what work schedule the contractors use and on weather conditions this fall. It is not likely, however, that either project will be completed this year. Regardless of the stage of completion on each project at winter suspension, efforts will be made to provide satisfactory driving surfaces for the public during the winter.

DOT officials recently issued a press release saying that no work is planned on the N.D. Highway 19 lake crossings this year. The department has obligated all

of its regular funding for this year, and the N.D. Highway 19 crossings do not presently qualify for emergency funding, so there are no funds available for work on this highway.

A consulting engineer firm is currently working on developing the concept for a project on U.S. Highway 2 westbound between Devils Lake and Churchs Ferry. Included in this project are flood problem areas at Mauvais Coulee, Stink Lake, Channel A and possibly others. This project is scheduled for 2001, but some emergency work may be done in 2000 if spring flooding is experienced again next spring.

DOT design engineers in Bismarck are currently working on developing design concepts for the Stump Lake crossing on N.D. Highway 1. When this project will be built will depend primarily on how rapidly Devils Lake spills into Stump Lake. The plans should be ready by next spring should Devils Lake continue its rapid rise.

N.D. Department of Agriculture

Farmers and ranchers in the eastern portion of North Dakota continue to experience weather-related crop problems that began this spring when flood conditions and high water tables delayed or prevent planting. Many have lost their hay crops and are concerned about having an ample supply for feeding livestock. Farmers and ranchers have told state agricultural staff that they may resort to selling livestock if feed supplies are limited.

Lake Region Human Service Center (LRHSC)

Three teams have been established through the Disaster Solutions Program to provide services to disaster victims in the Lake Region area. The program is part of the N.D. of Human Services' Crisis Counseling Program. Short-term activities include: identifying individuals who may qualify and have not yet called FEMA's toll-free registration number, (800) 946-9029; and a needs assessment of stress impact on individuals within the region. One team has been assigned to address the needs of residents living in Rolette, Benson, Eddy, Cavalier, Towner and Ramsey Counties. A second team has been working with residents on the Spirit Lake Tribe reservation. The Lake Region Human Service Center is recruiting for staff for the third team, who will be working on The Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa reservation.

Devils Lake Basin Joint Water Resource Board

The Water Resource Board continues to monitor the flow of water through coulees into Devils Lake. Coulee flows recorded on July 22 at 7:00 a.m. are as follows:

Starkweather	4 cfs (cubic feet per second)
Edmore	10 cfs
Mauvais (Near Cando)	166 cfs

The Water Resource Board will be spraying cattails in the Jerusalem outlet next week only in Ramsey County and not Nelson County.

Nelson County Emergency Management

The emergency manager has received reports from individuals who have had difficulty registering for assistance. Problems were reported to North Dakota Emergency Management and the FEMA teleregistration supervisors; the individuals have since been contacted directly by the teleregistration center.

The emergency manager has also been meeting with city officials to discuss possible Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) projects. Projects under consideration would address the following areas: street problems in the city of Pekin; ponding water at the Tolna city park; improved drainage at a city of Michigan mobile home park; problems with slough areas along the city of Petersburg's lagoons. The city of Aneta may have some mitigation projects, and the Nelson County Water Resource Board continues to work on dewatering projects north of Michigan area.

Ramsey County Commission

Commissioners have been working with North Dakota communities on resolutions of support for an emergency outlet project for the city of Devils Lake. Entities recently signing a resolution of support included the city of West Fargo and Cass and Grand Forks counties. Twenty-three people recently participated in a media day held in Devils Lake for Barnes County area media.

City of Devils Lake

Engineers and officials for the city of Devils Lake have been refining design plans for diverting water from East Devils Lake to the Tolna Coulee. SWC has assigned an engineer to work directly with the city to provide technical assistance. Permit applications for this work have been submitted by state officials to the USACE. The USACE has also pledged technical assistance.

Ramsey County Emergency Management

In Ramsey County, up to 1,244 structures between 1,447 and 1,460 feet could be impacted by an endorsement to flood insurance policies that will allow for payment of claims in situations where flood inundation is imminent.

Approximately 16 to 20 Ramsey County structures along the Devils Lake shoreline and along upper lakes in the Devils Lake Basin have been moved through a waiver of NFIP requirements this year. Up to 12 more structures may be moved this year.

Local officials will be meeting with representatives for railroads to discuss flood-threatened rail lines in the Devils Lake area. Rail lines may need to be elevated.

Ramsey County Rural Utilities needs funding to relocate a flood-threatened lift station on N.D. Highway 20. The project is expected to cost between \$300,000 and \$400,000. The utility has applied for HMGP funds.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: Assistance has been provided, as reported.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: FEMA, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Red Cross, consulting engineers and members of the N.D. Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD).
9. OTHER: Situation Reports published by the N.D. Division of Emergency Management are posted on the Division's Internet Home page. The address is: <http://www.state.nd.us/dem>.

Douglas C. Friez, State Director